

# OUTDOOR SAFETY POLICY

## Reason this policy is important:

Outdoor play is an important part of a child's physical development and provides learning opportunities different from the indoor environment. Adequate supervision in a safe environment allows children to explore more freely. Play in a safe outdoor environment promotes good health and reduces the risk of injury to children and staff.

## Procedure and Practices, including responsible person(s):

- Each morning \_\_\_\_\_ (staff title/name) will be responsible to check the playground using the Daily Playground Checklist before children are allowed to play. This includes checking for standing water, debris, glass, beehives/wasp nests, tripping hazards, other injurious material, or damage to any equipment. Loose surface fill will be evenly distributed and removed from sidewalks/pathways. (Assigning a different staff member each day will help find more hazards.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (staff title/name) will be responsible to insure that sidewalks and entrances are free of standing water, ice, and snow.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (staff title/name) will be notified of any hazards and act upon a resolution based on the importance of the issue so that the correction can be made as quickly as possible. \_\_\_\_\_ (staff title/name) will ensure that the hazards are removed, made inaccessible or repaired immediately to prevent injury.
- Basic rules that all children and staff are aware of will be enforced to ensure safety on the playground.
- The playground equipment will be developmentally appropriate, in good repair, anchored and installed according to manufacturer's instruction.
- Impact absorbing ground surface will be installed below play equipment at the appropriate depth for the height of fall according to the type of surface fill and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) guidelines.
- Sandboxes will be covered when not in use.
- The outdoor play area will be enclosed by a fence to aid in supervision. Staff will be positioned for best view.
- Helmets will be used for all riding toys with a wheel-base of more than 20". Helmets will meet CPSC or American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) guidelines.
- Riding toys will be spokeless, capable of being steered, sized appropriately for the child, have a low center of gravity, and be in good condition and free of sharp edges and protrusions.
- Shaded areas are provided to protect against overexposure to heat and sun.
- Parents need to bring their children dressed appropriately for outdoor play every day. Outdoor playtime may not occur or be shortened due to weather conditions. This includes a wind chill at or below 15° F and a heat index at or above 90° F as identified by the National Weather Service. \_\_\_\_\_ (staff title/name) will be responsible to determine if any limitations on outdoor play need to be considered.
- Children will have access to drinking water while playing outdoors to prevent dehydration.
- A first aid kit will be taken out for use on the playground. Special medications will be readily accessible for children with asthma, bee allergies, or other conditions that may require immediate treatment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (staff title/name) will inspect the playground area monthly using Daily Playground Safety Checklist
- All injuries occurring during outdoor play will be documented on an Minor Injury Report form or Student Injury Report form handled according to the Injury Policy.

## When the policy applies:

This policy applies during childcare hours when the children take part in outdoor play.

## Communication plan for staff and parents:

Name and address of child care agency

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- \_\_\_\_\_ will cover policies, plans, and procedures with all new staff (paid and volunteer) during orientation training. They will sign that they have read, understand and agree to abide by the content of the policies.
- During enrollment this policy will be reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_ with the parents. Parents will sign that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the content of the policies.
- A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff and parents in the policy handbook located \_\_\_\_\_.
- Parents may receive a copy of the policy at anytime upon request. A summary of this policy will be included in the parent handbook.
- Parents and staff will receive written notification of any updates.

### References:

- Consumer Product Safety Commission: [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)
- Caring for Our Children – <http://nrckids.org>
- Model Child Care Health Policies – <http://www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org>

**Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_ Director/Owner  
\_\_\_\_\_ Health Professional (physician, nurse)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Staff member  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (parent, advisory committee, police, CPS)

### Effective Date and Review Date:

This policy is effective \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ and will be reviewed annually by \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ or sooner if needed. Parents and staff will be notified of any upcoming policy review.

\*This format is adapted from and used with permission of: National Training Institute for Child Care Health Consultants, UNC, 2000

Name and address of child care agency